

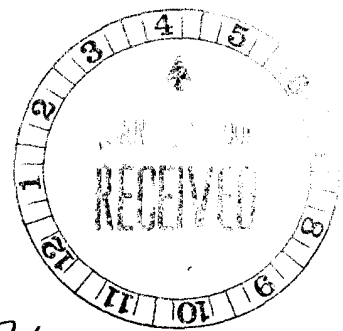
SIDNEY STRICKLAND AND ASSOCIATES, PLLC
3050 K ST. N.W., SUITE 101
WASHINGTON, DC 20007-5108
TELEPHONE: 202-295-4024
FAX: 202-672-5399

SIDNEY L. STRICKLAND, JR.
SIDNEY.STRICKLAND@STRICKLANDPLLCC.COM

January 17, 2006

Honorable Vernon A. Williams
Surface Transportation Board
Case Control Unit, Suite 713
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20423-0001

215576



***Re: STB Finance Docket No. 34798, City of Alameda—Acquisition
Exemption—Alameda Belt Line***

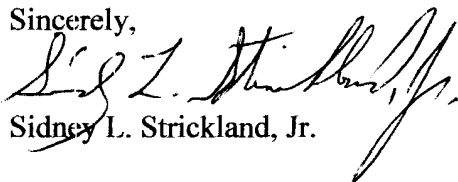
Dear Secretary Williams:

Enclosed for filing in the above-captioned proceeding are an original and ten copies of the Supplementary Pleading.

Please acknowledge receipt of this letter by date stamping the enclosed copy of this letter and returning it to me in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (202) 295-4024.

Sincerely,


Sidney L. Strickland, Jr.

ENTERED
Office of the
Public Record
January 17, 2006

**BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

215576

FINANCE DOCKET NO. 34798

**CITY OF ALAMEDA
-- ACQUISITION EXEMPTION --
ALAMEDA BELT LINE**

SUPPLEMENTARY PLEADING

FILED
Office of the Clerk
U.S. Department of Transportation
Public Hearing

William M. Bitting
Benjamin B. Salvaty
Hill, Farrer, and Burrill, LLP
300 South Grand Avenue
37th Floor-One California Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90071-3147
(213) 620-0460

Sidney L. Strickland, Jr.,
Sidney Strickland and Associates, PLLC
3050 K Street, NW, Suite 101
Washington, DC 20007
(202) 295-4024

Attorneys for Alameda Belt Line

January 17, 2006

**BEFORE THE
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

FINANCE DOCKET NO. 34798

**CITY OF ALAMEDA
-- ACQUISITION EXEMPTION --
ALAMEDA BELT LINE**

SUPPLEMENTARY PLEADING

The Alameda Belt Line ("ABL") submits this Supplemental Pleading pursuant to the decision of the Surface Transportation Board ("Board") served December 15, 2005, in this proceeding ("December 15th Decision"). The City of Alameda ("City") has filed with the Board a Notice of Exemption under 49 C.F.R 1150.31 ("Notice of Exemption") to acquire ABL's line of railroad between M.P. 0.0 and M.P. 2.61 (the "Line").

However, the Notice of Exemption should be rejected because: (1) the Notice of Exemption contains false information as to the City's intent to continue rail service—their intent is to create a trail; (2) the City cannot evict ABL and Union Pacific ("UP") from the Line through the Board's "class exemption" process or through a pending court case; (3) the present case is complicated and controversial and is not a good candidate for the Board's expedited Notice of Exemption process; and (4) the City improperly seeks to have the Board engage in a contract dispute.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

In 1918, the City constructed a municipal belt line railroad along Clement Avenue, between Pearl and Grand Street, to serve the newly developing northern industrial area of the City. After receiving recommendations for extending the belt line to serve a large scale project involving California Packing Corporation and Alaska Packers Association, as well as other future industrial development, the City, on September 16, 1924, enacted an ordinance setting forth an agreement to sell the belt line railroad to the Western Pacific Railroad Company ("WP") and The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company ("ATSF"), for the purposes of owning and operating the municipal belt line railroad as a new corporation now known as the ABL.

The City, WP and ATSF formally executed an agreement on December 15, 1924. Pursuant to the agreement, City agreed to sell its belt line railroad to ABL for the sum of \$30,000. According to the City, paragraph 14 of the agreement, which is at issue in pending California State court proceedings, gave the City an option to repurchase the belt line railroad:

Fourteenth: Said City shall have the right at any time hereafter to purchase said belt line railroad including all extensions thereof, for a sum equal to the original cost, together with the cost of any and all additional investments and extensions made therein by said ALAMEDA BELT LINE, provided, that said City shall give at least one year's previous notice of its intention so to do by ordinance to that effect; and provided that at the same time it purchases from the parties of the first part, or either of them as the case may be, the branch railroad, extensions and spur tracks referred to in the twelfth section hereof.

It is agreed that said ALAMEDA BELT LINE will keep an accurate account of the cost of additional investments and extensions, and file a verified report thereof annually with the City Clerk of said City, similar to the report filed with the Railroad Commission. It is further agreed and understood that the term "investments" as herein used shall not include the cost of upkeep and repairs.

In July, 1925, the Railroad Commission of the State of California approved the acquisition. Subsequently, in January 1926, the Interstate Commerce Commission ("ICC") approved the acquisition of the Line by ATSF and WP. See Acquisition And Construction By Alameda Belt Line, 105 I.C.C. 349 (1926) and supplemented at 124 I.C.C. 465 (1927).

In 1998, the Board authorized the granting of local trackage rights by ABL, now owned by BNSF Railway Company ("BNSF") (as successor to ATSF) and UP (as successor to WP), to UP over 1.80 miles of ABL's rail line between MP 0.00 near Clement Avenue and MP 1.80 near Sherman Street. See Union Pacific Railroad Company --Trackage Rights Exemption -- Alameda Belt Line F.D. 33682, served November 24, 1998.

In November 1999, based on staff recommendations, the Alameda City Council passed an ordinance giving notice to ABL that the City intended to exercise its option to repurchase the railroad and all "extensions thereof" on December 4, 2000, pursuant to the requirements of paragraph 14 of the parties' 1924 agreement.

ABL challenged the City's actions, asserting federal preemption as a defense to the City's arguments and has been engaged in a series of complex court proceedings before California trial courts and the California Court of Appeals. A California trial court initially granted ABL's motion for summary adjudication as to ABL's contention that paragraph 14 noted above was unenforceable because the option lacked sufficient specificity to comply with the statute of frauds, and that the fixed price option would be an illegal restraint on alienation. The trial court

denied the City's cross motion for summary adjudication that paragraph 14 was enforceable. On appeal by City, a California Court of Appeals panel overturned the trial court order and remanded the matter to the trial court for further proceedings. See Alameda Belt Line v. City of Alameda, 113 Cal.App. 4th 15, 5 Cal.Rptr.3d 879 (2003). The matter remains pending in a state court.

On December 9, 2005, the City filed with the Board a Notice of Exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31 ("Notice of Exemption") to acquire ABL's line of railroad located between M.P. 0.0 and M.P. 2.61 (the "Line"). The City readily admits that it filed the Notice of Exemption to trump ABL's federal preemption defenses in the Court proceedings discussed above. See Notice of Exemption at 6.

On December 14, 2005, ABL filed with the Board an Emergency Petition to Stay. After the City responded on December 15, 2005 ("Initial Response"), the Board, on the same date, granted a housekeeping stay of the effective date of the exemption to allow time for the parties to provide additional information and for the Board to consider the issues presented in the stay request.

On January 9, 2006, Encinal Real Estate, Inc. ("Encinal") filed with the Board a letter purportedly supporting the City's effort to acquire the Line. Encinal stated the Line has been used to serve its property and tenants, and that its tenants will require rail service in the future. See Encinal Letter at 1.

SUPPLEMENTAL FACTS AND ARGUMENTS

I.

THE NOTICE OF EXEMPTION SHOULD BE REJECTED ON GROUNDS IT CONTAINS FALSE INFORMATION

The City's Notice of Exemption to acquire the rail line owned by ABL should be rejected because it contains false and misleading information. In the Notice, the City unequivocally states that the "acquisition is for continued operation...." Notice at 9. The City also claims that it "anticipates that rail operation will continue as before." Notice at 6. The City further notes that "[i]n the event Union Pacific lawfully terminates its trackage rights and lawfully ceases to provide service, City either will contract with another operator ... or will seek appropriate authorization for abandonment...." Notice at 6.¹ As is demonstrated below, the City's real motivation in seeking to acquire the Line is not continued rail service but to use portions of the rail line corridor for a trail. The false representations made to the Board are not unintentional but are a deliberate attempt by the City to hide the fact that it is seeking to obtain, through the Board's expedited "class exemption" procedure, approval for a transaction that does not fall within the scope of 49 U.S.C. § 10901.

Attached as Exhibit 1 is the Draft Vision Document prepared by the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy ("RTC") in coordination with the City ("Trail Document"). The introduction to the Trail Document concisely articulates the City's true motivation in seeking to acquire the Line: "to convert the former Alameda Belt Line Railroad

¹ The City's false representations are perpetuated in its Initial Response. For example, the City represented to the Board: that it "seeks to acquire the line as a rail line consistent with rail use" [Initial Response at 2]; that the "City's purposes will preserve the national rail system" [Initial Response at 4]; and that the "City's action will not deprive any shipper of any rail service, and City's action is the last hope to preserve the line so service can be provided now or in the future to potential shippers on the line" [Initial Response at 4].

alignment to a multiple-use trail across most of the main island.” Trail Document at 2.

The Trail Document goes on to note that:

The Alameda Belt Line railroad alignment is valuable as a trail and also offers a potential route for rapid transit. The Cross Alameda Trail can be compatible with many potential transit options, such as an adjoining bus rapid transit, light-rail, or ultra-light rail line.

Trail Document at 3. One searches the Trail Document in vain for any reference to rail freight operations. Indeed, the Trail Document expressly suggests that in constructing the trail the City “[r]emove [the] rails.” Trail Document at 10.

The Trail Document goes on to acknowledge the litigation between the City and ABL over the rail line and recommends, as one of the next steps to be taken, that the City:

Negotiate to acquire part or all of the right-of-way still owned by ABL. Attempt to secure an easement, make a partial purchase, or settle pending legal proceedings. Pursue litigation if required.

Trail Document at 12.

Attached as Exhibit 2, are relevant pages of the Draft Feasibility Study for the Cross Alameda Trail prepared by the City (“Feasibility Study”).² In the Feasibility Study, the City notes that it:

has an opportunity to develop a new multi-use trail along the northern side of the City’s main island, a corridor that includes a former rail line. The rail alignment was formerly used by the Alameda Belt Line Railroad, which served some of Alameda’s major industrial sites on the north side of Alameda’s main island during the past 100 years.

Feasibility Study at I-1.

² The entire Draft Feasibility Study is set forth on the City’s website at: www.ci.alameda.ca.us/publicworks/crossalameda.com.

The City goes on to note that: “[t]his [rail] corridor has long been identified as a potential trail route, but the growing interest in developing the former rail corridor has brought a new urgency to the project.” Feasibility Study at I-1. In addressing the status of the rail corridor, the City notes that: “[w]ith the halt of rail service along most of the corridor, there has been a growing interest in utilizing the former ABL route as open space.” Feasibility Study at II-2. The City also points out that the residents of Alameda have approved two ballot measures that would re-zone ABL’s rail yard as Open Space. The implementation of this measure has been delayed until the voters approve a means of funding the acquisition of the yard. Feasibility Study at II-2. Most interestingly, in the Feasibility Study, the City acknowledges that the railroad “will need to file a formal abandonment request” before at least a portion of the ABL line can be acquired by the City. Feasibility Study at II-2.³

Where, as here, a notice of exemption contains false or misleading information, the requested exemption is void *ab initio*. See 49 CFR § 1150.32(c); STB Finance Docket No. 34177, Iowa, Chicago & Eastern Railroad Corporation – Acquisition And Operation Exemption – Lines of I&M Rail Link, LLC (not printed), served July 22, 2002. Here, the requested exemption was stayed by the Board in the December 15th Decision. Accordingly, the Board should reject the Notice of Exemption on grounds that it contains false information.

Moreover, the City’s use of the “class exemption” procedures is inappropriate. In Land Conservancy – Acq. & Oper. – Burlington Northern, 2 S.T.B. 673 (1997), reconsideration denied, STB Finance Docket No. 33389, served May 13, 1998 (“Land

³ Attached as Exhibit 3 is a June 2, 2004, article from the Alameda Times-Star which confirms that the City is intending to convert the ABL corridor into a paved trail.

Conservancy”), pet. for judicial review dismissed sub nom., The Land Conservancy of Seattle and King County v. STB, 238 F.3d 429 (9th Cir. 2000), the Board disallowed the sale of an active rail line to a purchaser that intended to convert the line to a trail. In Land Conservancy, the Board found that the deliberate course of conduct on the part of the purchaser constituted a misuse of the Board’s procedures and took action to protect the integrity of the Board’s processes. In so doing, the Board explained that:

[t]he policy underlying the governing acquisition exemption procedures is to support continued operation of rail lines in lieu of abandoning them. The facts here support the conclusion that [the acquiring entity] never had any intention of reinstituting rail service on the line. It appears, rather, that [the acquiring entity] has put into effect a plan to convert the line to trail use as soon as possible following its acquisition of the line. This constitutes a misuse of our procedures, which envision that a party that acquires an active rail line does so to continue to provide rail service. Manifestly, [the acquiring entity] never had any such intent.

Land Conservancy at 677.

The facts in Land Conservancy are virtually identical to those in this proceeding. The City is attempting to acquire the ABL rail line through the “class exemption”, with no intentions of providing rail freight service. The only apparent distinction between Land Conservancy and this proceeding is that, unlike the acquiring entity in Land Conservancy, the City will not be able immediately to seek abandonment authority, since it must await the outcome of the state court case. In any event, as the attached Exhibits clearly demonstrate, the City’s sole motivation in seeking to acquire the ABL rail line is to convert all or portions of the line into a trail.

In filing the Notice of Exemption, the City is not only abusing the Board’s “class exemption” procedures, but is also attempting to circumvent the Board’s established procedures for converting rail corridors for trail use. Consequently, as in Land

Conservancy, the Board should protect the integrity of its processes and summarily reject the Notice of Exemption.

**II.
ONLY THE BOARD CAN AUTHORIZE THE EVICTION OF ABL AND UNION
PACIFIC FROM THE RAIL LINE**

There are currently two carriers authorized to perform rail freight service on the ABL rail line: ABL, the owner of the line, and UP, which has local trackage rights over 1.80 miles of the line. ABL was authorized to acquire and operate the rail line by the ICC in 1926 and UP was granted the local trackage rights by the Board in 1998. To achieve its real objective of having the rail line converted to a trail, the City must first evict ABL and UP from the line. The City, however, cannot achieve that goal either through the Board's "class exemption" procedures or the pending court case. Only the Board may authorize the removal of ABL and UP from the rail line and the Board may do so only if the requirements of 49 U.S.C § 10903 are met.

The Board has exclusive and plenary authority over the abandonment of rail lines. Chicago & N.W. Trnsp. Co. v. Kalo Brick & Tile Co., 450 U.S. 311, 319-21 (1981); Phillips Co. v. Denver and Rio Grande Western R., 97 F.3d 1375 (10th Cir. 1996), cert. denied, 521 U.S. 1104 (1997). Consequently, only the Board may authorize the removal of a carrier from a rail line. See Consolidated Rail Corp. v. ICC, 29 F.3d 706 (D.C. Cir. 1994). Absent prior Board approval, a government entity, such as the City, may not force a railroad to cease operations over a right-of-way or to abandon a rail line. See National Wildlife Federation v. ICC, 850 F.2d 694 (D.C. Cir. 1988).

The City claims that it filed the Notice of Exemption only in furtherance of its contract claims before the California court. In Thompson v. Texas Mexican R. Co., 328 U.S. 134, 147 (1946), the Supreme Court found that a contract cannot trump the jurisdiction of the ICC, and now the Board, over service discontinuances and abandonments. Regardless of the outcome of the California court case, the City cannot forcibly remove ABL and Union Pacific from the line and cannot convert the line to a trail without first obtaining abandonment and discontinuance authority from the Board. See STB Docket No. AB-862X, Twin State Railroad Company – Abandonment Exemption – In Caledonia And Essex Counties, VT (not printed) served November 18, 2005, slip op. at 3 (“In sum, the ICA preempts any court order that would require or allow the removal of the ties, track, equipment and other property on the line before full abandonment authority is issued and any and all conditions are met”). Consequently, since the City is a third party, it must obtain adverse abandonment authority under Section 10903 before it can remove ABL and Union Pacific from the rail line and convert the line to a trail. See STB Finance Docket No. 34090, Union Pacific Railroad Company – Petition For Declaratory Order (not printed), served November 9, 2001.⁴

III.

THE NOTICE OF EXEMPTION SHOULD BE REJECTED ON GROUNDS THAT THE PRESENT CASE IS COMPLICATED AND CONTROVERSIAL

The Board has emphasized that the notice of exemption process is reserved for uncomplicated and noncontroversial cases. See The Burlington Northern Santa Fe

⁴ In the Notice of Exemption, the City alleges that ABL “may have engaged in sales of parcels important for operation of the remainder of its system....” Notice of Exemption at 4. ABL has sold certain parcels of real estate along the Line. The sold parcels, however, are extraneous to continued rail service on the Line and the rail corridor remains intact. While the sold parcels are not needed by ABL or UP for continued rail service on the Line, those parcels are apparently coveted by the City for other non-freight rail use.

Railway Company - Acquisition and Operation Exemption - State of South Dakota, STB Finance Docket No. 34645 (STB served Jan. 14, 2005) ("South Dakota"). There, the Board rejected the notice of exemption, and emphasized that the notice of exemption process "is typically reserved for uncomplicated and noncontroversial cases." Id. slip op. at 2. The Board further stated:

As we have explained in prior cases, see, e.g., Riverview Trenton Railroad Company -- Acquisition and Operation Exemption -- Crown Enterprises, Inc., STB Finance Docket No. 33980, slip op. at 6-10 (STB served Feb. 15, 2002), the § 1150.31 class exemption typically applies to "routine" transactions that are not subject to substantial controversy and opposition. The facts and issues presented in the pleadings filed to date regarding BNSF's notice of exemption, combined with the fact that this transaction is now tied up in state court litigation respecting BNSF's rights under the 1986 Operating Agreement, indicates that the transaction contemplated by BNSF is not "routine" or "noncontroversial" either.

Id. slip op. at 2-3.

The Board continued: "[u]nder these circumstances, we will reject the § 1150.31 exemption notice filed by BNSF and direct BNSF to file either a § 10502 exemption petition or a formal § 10901 application, so that we will be able to compile a record that will allow us to resolve the issues raised." Id. slip op. at 3.

As in South Dakota, there is ongoing complex litigation between the City and ABL before a state court. ABL has challenged City's attempt to grab ABL's properties and has been engaged in a series of complex court proceedings before California trial courts and the California Court of Appeals. Among other things, ABL has asserted federal preemption as defense to the City's land grab of ABL's rail lines and other properties. Specifically, in January 2002, both ABL and the City filed cross-motions for summary adjudication as to their causes of action for declaratory relief in a California court, ABL seeking a declaration that paragraph 14 was

unenforceable on the grounds that the option lacked sufficient specificity to comply with the statute of frauds, and that the fixed price option would be an illegal restraint on alienation, and the City seeking a declaration that paragraph 14 was enforceable.

On April 11, 2002, the trial court issued orders granting ABL's motion and denying the City's motion. The court ruled as a matter of law that the repurchase option in paragraph 14 was not sufficiently definite to be enforceable under the statute of frauds. The City appealed and the California Court of Appeals subsequently overturned the trial court order and remanded the matter to the trial court for further proceedings. See Alameda Belt Line v. City of Alameda, 113 Cal.App. 4th 15, 5 Cal.Rptr.3d 879 (2003). The matter remains pending in state court.

Also, as in South Dakota, the Board needs to compile an adequate record to address the issues raised. For example, it is obvious from the attached Exhibits that the City has no intent to continue rail service; and, instead, seeks to remove ABL and UP from the rail line without engaging the Board's rail abandonment process to convert the line to a trail. Indeed, the Exhibits evidence a long term plan by the City to create a trail and demonstrate a total lack of interest in continued freight rail service. The City's abuse of Board processes to force a trail under the pretext of continuing rail service warrants the rejection of the Notice of Exemption. At a minimum, the City should be required to file either a petition for exemption or an application so that a more complete and extensive record can be developed before a final decision is issued on the merits of the City's proposals. There are numerous STB cases which have rejected the use of the Notice of Exemption process on grounds that the case is complicated, controversial, or requires further evidence to support a more complete record. See e.g., STB Finance Docket No.

34734, Northeast Interchange Railway, LLC—Lease and Operation Exemption—Line in Croton-on-Hudson, NY, served November 18, 2005; STB Finance Docket No. 34501, James Riffin D/B/A The Northern Central Railroad—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—in York County, PA, served February 23, 2005; STB Finance Docket No. 34484, James Riffin D/B/A The Northern Central Railroad—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—in York County, PA, and Baltimore County, MD, served April 20, 2004; STB Finance Docket No. 33980, Riverview Trenton Railroad Company—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—Crown Enterprises, Inc., served February 15, 2002.

IV.

CITY'S REQUEST THAT THE BOARD SETTLE A CONTRACT DISPUTE SHOULD BE DENIED

As the City readily admits in the Notice of Exemption and its Initial Response, it is seeking to use the Board's expedited "class exemption" procedures to gain an advantage over ABL in a contract dispute pending before the California court. The Board and its predecessor, however, have consistently refused to intercede in an ongoing contract dispute.

While the Board has exclusive jurisdiction over the acquisition and abandonment of rail lines, the Board does not have the requisite authority to interpret, reform or abrogate contracts, except in limited circumstances. See e.g., Houston Belt & Term. Ry. Co. Control, 275 I.C.C. 289, 313-14 (1950); Handling Freight Between Ship and Cars at Ports, 253 I.C.C. 371, 378 (1942); Southern Pac. Co. Abandonment, 242 I.C.C. 283, 285 (1940) ("Controversies pertaining to rights and obligations under private contracts are matters for determination by the courts"); Missouri-Kansas-Texas R.R. Co. v. K.C.T. Ry.

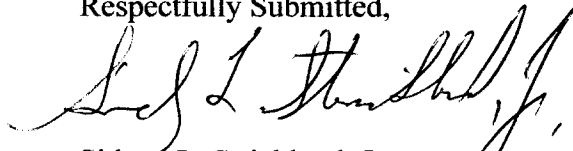
Co., 104 I.C.C. 203, 230-31 (1925) (ICC refrained from ruling on the use of a terminal facility until a court interpreted the operating agreement among the parties).

Accordingly, the Board should reject the Notice of Exemption and decline the City's invitation to become embroiled in the contract dispute pending in the California court. See Regents Of The Univ. System Of Georgia v. Carroll Et AL., 338 U.S. 586 (1950); Central New England Ry. Co. v. Boston & A.R. Co., 279 U.S. 415 (1929); and Gulf, Mobile & Ohio RR v. Illinois Central RR Co., 128 F. Supp. 311 (N.D. Ala. 1954).

CONCLUSION

City's Notice of Exemption herein should be rejected.

Respectfully Submitted,



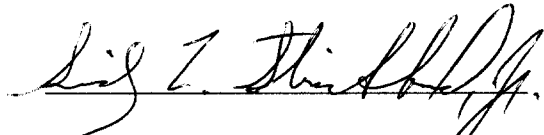
Sidney L. Strickland, Jr.,
Sidney Strickland and Associates, PLLC
3050 K Street, NW, Suite 101
Washington, DC 20007
(202) 295-4024

William M. Bitting
Benjamin B. Salvaty
Hill, Farrer, and Burrill, LLP
300 South Grand Avenue
37th Floor-One California Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90071-3147
(213) 620-0460

Attorneys for Alameda Belt Line

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

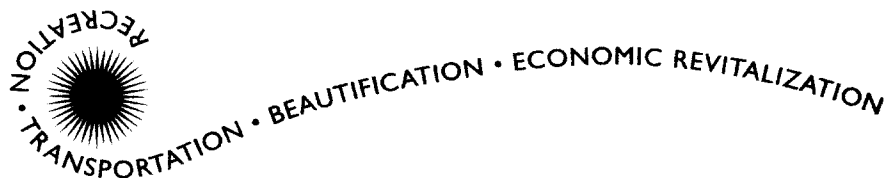
Alameda Belt Line Railroad (ABL) by and through its authorized representative, certifies that on January 17, 2006, ABL sent copies of the foregoing Supplementary Pleading by facsimile transmission and by mailing copies thereof by first-class mail to: Charles H. Montagne, Esq., 426 162nd Street, Seattle, Washington, 98177.



Sidney L. Strickland, Jr.,
Sidney Strickland and Associates, PLLC
3050 K Street, NW, Suite 101
Washington, DC 20007
(202) 295-4024

William M. Bitting
Benjamin B. Salvaty
Hill, Farrer, and Burrill, LLP
300 South Grand Avenue
37th Floor-One California Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90071-3147
(213) 620-0460

Attorneys for Alameda Belt Line



IMAGINE A TRAIL ACROSS
NORTH ALAMEDA FROM ALAMEDA
POINT TO THE MILLER-SWEENEY
(FRUITVALE) BRIDGE.

DRAFT

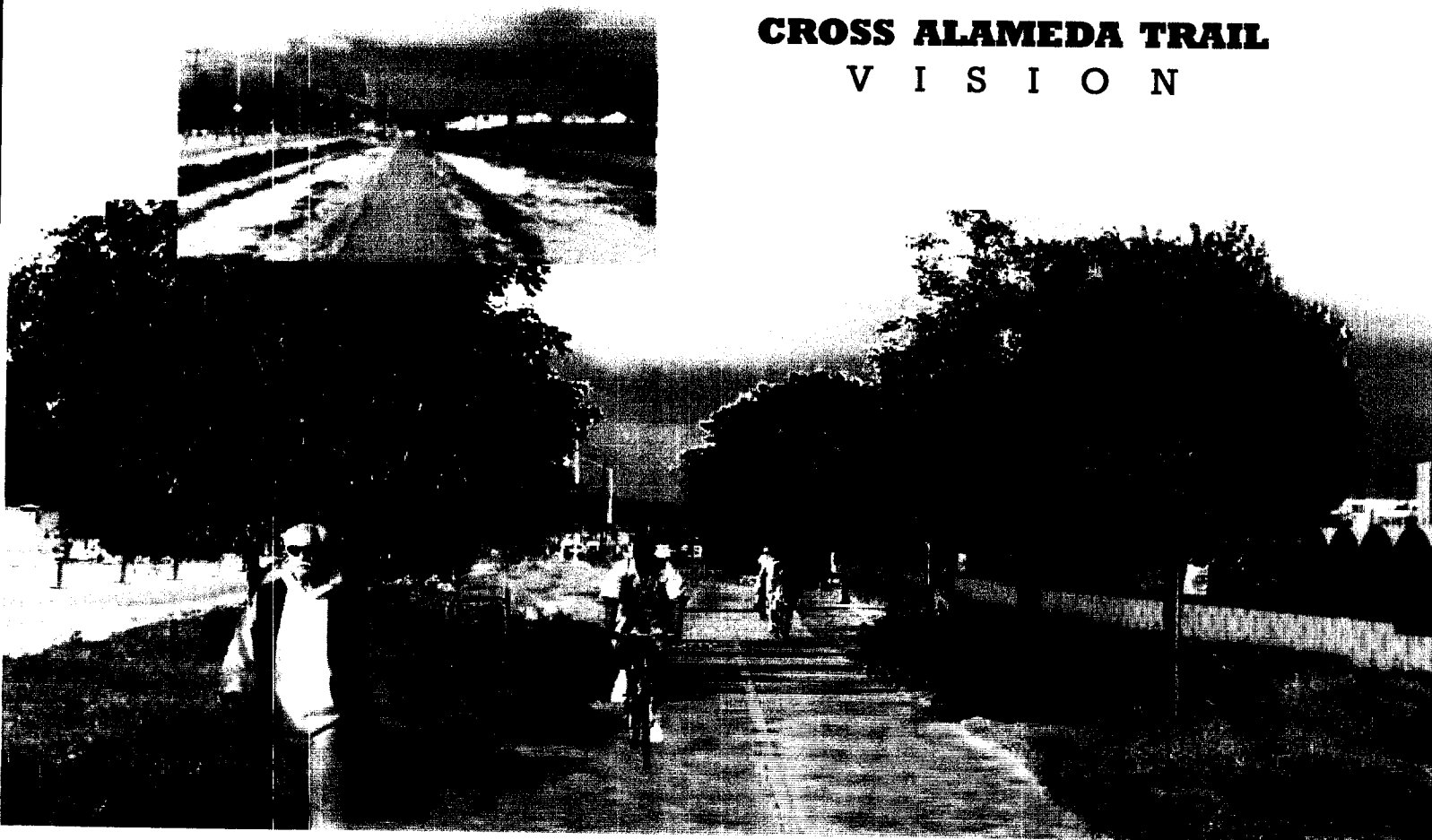
7/15/04

...A TRAIL THAT CELEBRATES
THE HISTORY OF ALAMEDA AND
THE ALAMEDA BELT LINE RAILROAD.

...A TRAIL THAT PROVIDES
BETTER BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN
ACCESS TO THE PARK STREET
AND WEBSTER STREET BUSINESS
DISTRICTS.

YOU CAN DO MORE THAN IMAGINE
THIS TRAIL, YOU CAN HELP
MAKE IT HAPPEN!

CROSS ALAMEDA TRAIL VISION



INTRODUCTION

Alameda has a unique opportunity to convert the former Alameda Belt Line Railroad alignment to a multiple-use trail across most of the main island.

In 2001, members of Alameda Open Space approached Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) to learn about converting the abandoned Alameda Belt Line Railroad alignment into a multiple-use trail across the island of Alameda. Since then, RTC has been working with individuals, community-based organizations and the City of Alameda to explore the potential of the proposed "Cross Alameda Trail". Early in 2004, individuals and advocacy groups in Alameda formed the Cross Alameda Trail Steering Committee (CATSC) to plan and promote the trail with RTC. The two organizations have begun to invite public participation in developing the trail. The City of Alameda Department of Public Works has offered technical support during this process, and has secured funding to conduct a trail feasibility study.

The trail will begin at the corner of Main Street and Ralph M. Appezato Parkway where it will connect with the existing Main Street Greenway. It will travel east along the former Alameda Belt Line railroad alignment and other facilities until it reaches the Miller-Sweeney ("Fruitvale") bridge.

Converting an unused railroad alignment to a trail is a complex process. This vision document has been compiled by the California field office of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy in cooperation with the Cross Alameda Trail Steering Committee. This document, based upon feedback received through community workshops and surveys, is one of many steps toward completing this trail that will benefit Alameda's residents, businesses, and visitors.

VISION DOCUMENT

The purpose of this vision document is to:

- ✦ Provide a broad overview of the proposed Cross Alameda Trail.
- ✦ Describe some of the anticipated benefits of the trail.
- ✦ Provide a package that Alameda residents and decision-makers can use to for community outreach and to describe the trail to potential funding agencies.
- ✦ Provide information and community input to the city to help guide its Bay Trail feasibility study.

CROSS ALAMEDA TRAIL STEERING COMMITTEE

The Cross Alameda Trail Steering Committee (CATSC) consists of individuals and community groups that support the development of a multi-use trail to bring recreation, transportation and quality of life benefits to the City of Alameda. Steering Committee members include:

Debra Arbuckle, ALAMEDA OPEN SPACE

Lucy Gigli, President, BIKE ALAMEDA

John Knox White, BIKE ALAMEDA

Helena Lengel, Biologist

Audrey Lord-Hausman, Co-Founder
PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY ALAMEDA

Melanie Mintz, RAILS-TO-TRAILS CONSERVANCY

Jon Spangler, Freelance Writer/Editor

Jean Sweeney, Founder, ALAMEDA OPEN SPACE

The city's Department of Public Works provides technical assistance to the Steering Committee. The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy facilitates the effort with organizational and logistical support. The role and composition of the CATSC is expected to expand and change as the Cross Alameda Trail project moves forward.



RAIL-TRAILS

In 1916, the world's most extensive rail transportation network stretched across the United States, with cities and small towns connected by ribbons of steel. In that year, the railroad system peaked with more than 270,000 miles of track winding across every state. Due to changes in development and transportation patterns, economics, and politics, railroads have since stopped utilizing more than 150,000 miles of track. Rails-to-Trails Conservancy was formed in 1986 to preserve this integral part of our nation's heritage. By converting unused rail into multi-use trails, the corridors continue to play a vital role in communities across the United States.

Today, the thriving rail-trail movement has created hundreds of public trails for running, walking, bicycling, skating and other purposes. There are approximately 12,600 miles of rail-trail across the U.S., and 285 miles in California alone. Converted rail-trails have many benefits:

- ✦ Rail-trails have gentle grades and minimal road intersections, making them perfect for seniors, families and people with disabilities.
- ✦ Rail-trails act as linear greenways through urban areas, providing much-needed open space and new recreational opportunities.
- ✦ Rail-trails promote sustainable land use and help revive historic business districts.
- ✦ Rail-trails are independent community amenities that enhance existing recreational resources by linking neighborhoods and schools to parks, waterfronts, recreational centers and other facilities.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Trails and greenways create opportunities for healthy recreation and transportation by providing people of all ages with attractive, safe, accessible and low- or no- cost places to bike, walk, hike, jog or skate.

Numerous national studies have shown that creating neighborhood places for physical activity is effective in getting people to exercise more. Studies estimate that creating or improving access to such places can result in a 25% increase in the number of persons who exercise at least three times a week!¹



ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Cities and towns across the U.S. have learned that converting former rail corridors to trails is economically sound. Rail-trails bring tourism-related opportunities and bolster property values. In a national survey, recent home buyers ranked proximity to a trail second in importance out of eighteen possible neighborhood amenities when shopping for a new home. Trails also save money. One 2.5-mile urban trip diverted from a motor vehicle to a bicycle during rush hour saves \$3.58 in avoided costs such as congestion, road construction, parking, gas, air and noise pollution.³

The Cross Alameda Trail would bring people and provide gateways to both of Alameda's historic business districts and Alameda Point.

TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS

Rail-trails can help make an urban or regional multi-modal transportation system seamless. Many jurisdictions across the country incorporate rail-trails into their transit plans, to get people safely and efficiently to and from transit stops and hubs. Rail-trails tend to be flat and direct, and often connect residential and business districts. Many people find rail-trails convenient as a primary means of getting safely to and from work, school, shopping areas and other destinations. With Alameda's flat topography and mild weather, the Cross Alameda Trail would provide an ideal place for people to walk and ride for both recreation and transportation.

"The trail will be great for businesses in both the Park Street and Webster Street commercial districts, and our organization is very happy to support it,"
— ROBB RATTO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE PARK STREET BUSINESS ASSOCIATION.

"Few factors contribute so much to successful aging as regular physical activity, and it's never too late to start."
— TOMMY G. THOMPSON, SECRETARY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

RAILS-WITH-TRAILS

The Alameda Belt Line railroad alignment is valuable as a trail and also offers a potential route for rapid transit. The Cross Alameda Trail can be compatible with many potential transit options, such as an adjoining bus rapid transit, light-rail, or ultra-light rail line. Multiple-use trails along active railroads, called "rails-with-trails," are expanding in number, and the CATSC supports this concept in Alameda.

IMAGINE TAKING A RIDE THROUGH HISTORY ON THE ALAMEDA BELT LINE.

Establishing a trail along the former Alameda Belt Line railroad provides an opportunity to experience living history. Trail users would be able to study the history of the city through interpretive signs, plaques and visits to existing and former landmarks.

Take a ride through time on the Alameda Belt Line — a unique window into Alameda's past.

In 1918, when Alameda was just developing its harbors, a ride along the railroad would have taken you through Alameda's growth as a center of shipbuilding and commerce. In later years, you would see its busy war and industrial development. Today, remnants of this vital past are still visible from Alameda's tree-lined residential streets. Look closely:

➤ Our trip into history begins at the foot of the "Fruitvale Bridge", where the Belt Line connected to the mighty Southern Pacific Railroad (SP). The SP wanted to build and own the Belt Line, but Alameda took on the project itself. A few years later the city sold it to the Western Pacific and Santa Fe railroads, SP's rivals.

➤ Riding toward the western end of the island, we pass some of the Belt Line's earliest customers: the Barnes & Tibbetts shipyard, and Dow Pump & Diesel Company — at one time Alameda's largest employer.

➤ Continuing westward we pass the California Packing Company's brick warehouse on Buena Vista Avenue, built in 1927. The Del Monte food products passing through here were shipped all over the United States.

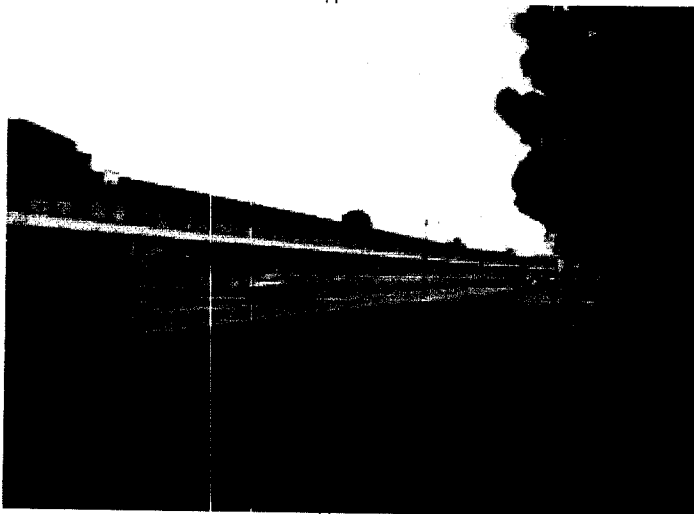
➤ At Sherman Street we pass the Encinal Terminals, where the tall-masted ships of the Alaska Packers fishing fleet anchored in the 1920s and 1930s. At the Morton Street Pier, we see the place where the Belt Line switched cars onto a freight ferry that linked Alameda with San Francisco, Oakland and Richmond. From there the cars were sent to destinations across the country on the Western Pacific and Santa Fe lines.

➤ Next, we stop at the Belt Line rail yard, where we visit engineer C.A. Theriault, whose touch on the locomotive's throttle was said to be so gentle that he could put a cup of water on the locomotive coupler and switch cars without spilling a drop. This small-town engineer traveled 1.5 million miles of track without ever leaving Alameda.

➤ As we wind our way west, we see the site of the former Skippy peanut butter plant. This building was part of Alameda's effort to develop its industrial base during the 1950s. Fore Terminals, Weyerhaeuser and Pennzoil are other prominent businesses from this era that were served by the Belt Line.

➤ Finally, we reach the former Alameda Naval Air Station. During World War II, the Belt Line kept pace with Alameda's busy war effort, delivering up to 100 cars a day to the U.S. military and to supporting industries like Bethlehem Steel.

— compiled by Bart Thurber and Liz Bogan
for the Cross Alameda Trail Steering Committee



IMPROVING BICYCLING AND WALKING IN ALAMEDA

The City of Alameda has recently taken steps to make bicycling and walking safer and more convenient. Among other projects, the city has built the Bay Farm Island Bike Bridge, enhanced crosswalks, and installed bicycle-sensitive loop detectors.

Policies in the **1990 General Plan** and **1999 Bicycle Master Plan** call for additional off-street paths to link popular work and leisure destinations with residential neighborhoods. Many of the components of the Cross Alameda Trail are included in the General Plan. (See text box, back cover.) The upcoming Transportation Master Plan will include both an updated Bicycle Plan and a Pedestrian Plan. The Cross Alameda Trail is also a top priority for Pedestrian Friendly Alameda.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In the spring of 2004, the CATSC began to publicize the proposed trail and seek public input. Steering Committee members attended meetings of community organizations, such as HomeBASE and the League of Women Voters of Alameda. The CATSC is continuing to schedule meetings and distribute fliers and surveys throughout the city.

More than 30 interested citizens attended a **June 2 Community Workshop** about the trail. And to celebrate **National Trails Day** on **June 5**, over 30 people joined trail proponents to walk, bicycle, and discuss the proposed route. At both events, participants were universally enthusiastic about the trail concept. With this completed vision document in hand, CATSC and Rails-to-Trails Conservancy will continue to work with the city staff, its boards, and commissions, while meeting with community groups and individuals to plan, design, and implement the trail. Groups that have expressed interest in learning more about the trail include: the Alameda Point Advisory Committee, West Alameda Business Association, Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club and the Park Street Business Association.



TRAIL GUIDE AND SURVEY DEVELOPED

To publicize the Cross Alameda Trail, to present the trail's possibilities and challenges, and to solicit public comments, a survey and descriptive trail guide were made available in English, Chinese, and Spanish. 50 trail surveys were returned in time to be included in this document. The CATSC will continue to distribute surveys. The final results will be submitted to the city for consideration in its trail feasibility study, which is due to be completed in December 2004.

Below is a sample of the survey responses thus far.

What elements make a place feel like a "trail" to you?

Landscaping/Trees/Plants; No Vehicles/Traffic; Nature/Wildlife Viewing; Wide Pathways; Smooth, Paved Trails; Peaceful/Quiet; Dirt Trails; Benches/Bathrooms/Water; Safe; Connectivity

If a trail existed between Alameda Point and the Fruitvale Bridge, how would you use it?

Recreation/Exercise (43%); Commuting to Errands (33%); Commuting to Work (14%); Commuting to School (2%); Other (8%) (including scenic tours, with visitors, dog walking)

Using this trail, what would be your primary destinations?

Buena Vista Street, Lafayette Street, Webster Street and Park Street business districts; local marinas; Fruitvale BART; Marina Village; Ferry Terminal; Alameda Point; Northern Waterfront; College of Alameda; Transit Hub at Atlantic and Webster; Independence Plaza; Senior Center; to visit friends

If sufficient improvements are made, what is the likelihood you would choose to ride or walk instead of drive?

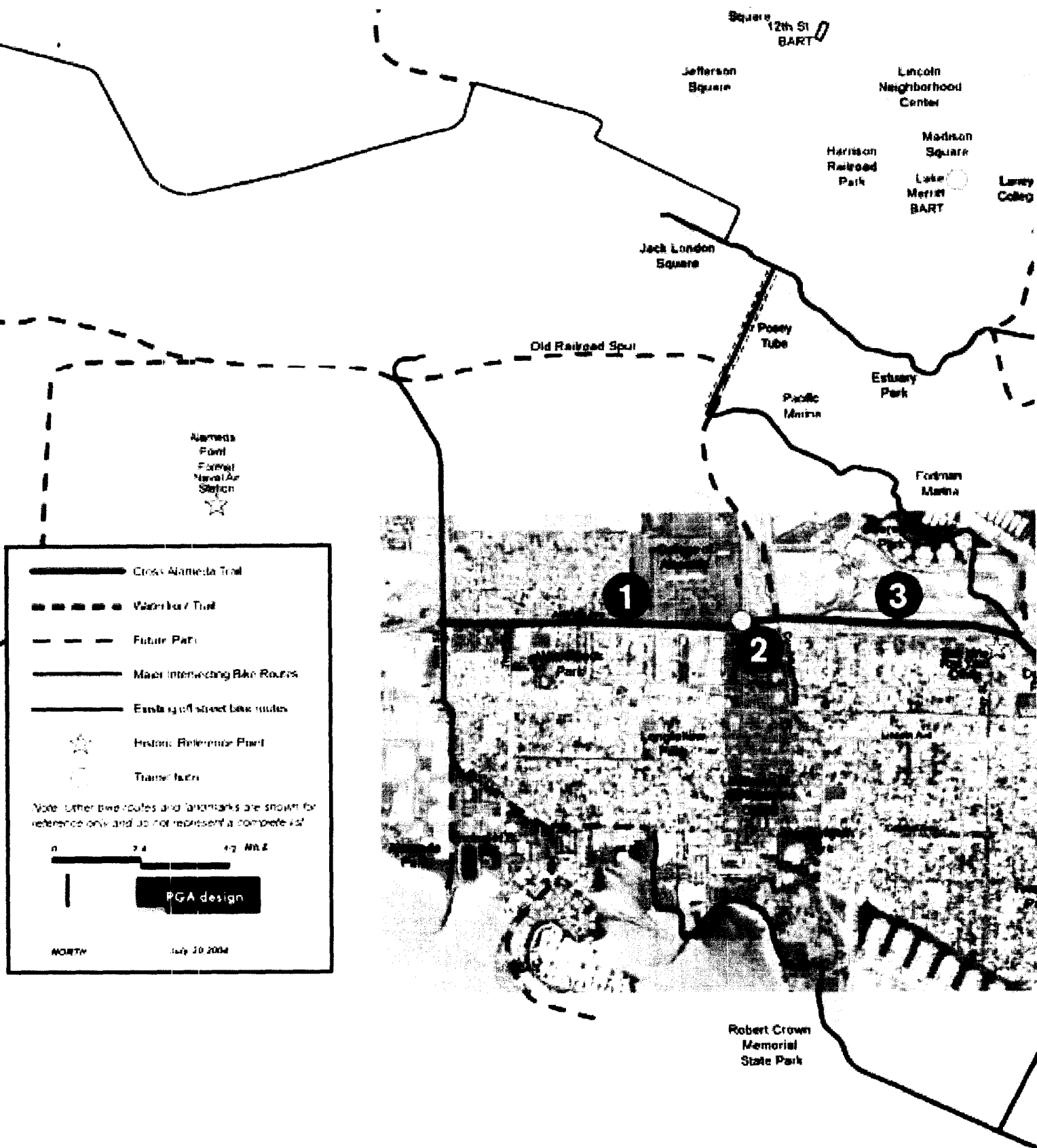
High (59%); Medium (23 %); Low (18%)

If the trail is built, what mode of travel do you expect to utilize most often?

Bicycling (46%); Walking (39%); Running/Jogging (10%); Other (rollerblading, surrey-riding etc.) (5%)

Suggested names for the trail include: Alameda Belt Line Historic Rail Trail, Cross Alameda Rail Trail, Island City Rail Trail and Alameda Bike-Pedestrian Trail.







CONNECTIVITY

The proposed Cross Alameda Trail will connect non-motorized travelers (cyclists, wheelchair users, joggers, walkers, parents with strollers, inline skaters, and others) to a variety of local and regional resources in and around Alameda. The trail will provide access to:

- ✦ The historic Park Street and Webster Street business districts.
- ✦ Residential neighborhoods.
- ✦ Schools (College of Alameda, Woodstock Elementary, Chipman Middle, Island High School) and day care facilities.
- ✦ Parks (Littlejohn Park, Thompson Field, McKinley Park, Main Street Greenway).
- ✦ Senior housing (Elders Inn, Independence Plaza).
- ✦ Marinas.
- ✦ Alameda Point.

The trail also will link people to bridges, local and Transbay bus routes, and BART, and provide connections to the entire region as a section of the Bay Trail.

THE BAY TRAIL: The Bay Trail is a planned recreational corridor that will eventually encircle San Francisco and San Pablo Bays with a continuous, 400-mile network of bicycle and hiking trails. It will connect the shorelines of all nine Bay Area counties, link 47 cities, and cross the major toll bridges in the region.

In Alameda, it encircles Bay Farm Island and is envisioned to also encircle much of the main island. Several segments already exist, such as the Grand Marina and Marina Village paths on the island's northern shoreline. The Cross Alameda Trail will serve as the connecting corridor between these segments and serve as Alameda's north shore portion of the Bay Trail.

TRANSIT CONNECTIONS: The trail will provide a safe and convenient route for non-motorized travelers between Alameda's residential neighborhoods and transit access points. When completed, the trail will link to bus stops on several AC Transit District routes (local lines 50, 51, 63, 19, and Transbay lines W, O, OX). The trail will improve access for bicyclists and walkers to the Fruitvale and 12th Street BART stations, as well as the Alameda-Oakland Ferry terminal. Many island residents do not have access to motor vehicles and depend on public transit, walking, or bicycling for transportation. With the trail in place, residents of all income levels will find it easier to commute to work, go shopping or attend schools without the need to drive a car.



TRAIL ALIGNMENT

The proposed Cross Alameda Trail, utilizing the Alameda Belt Line alignment wherever feasible, will provide a convenient, attractive and dedicated route for pedestrians and cyclists to travel across northern Alameda.

As much as possible, the trail should be an off-street path, separated from automobile traffic. In some places this will be relatively easy to accomplish, and in others, it will require more creativity to place the trail off the street. In some locations, the trail may consist of wide sidewalks or on-street bike lanes. This is a common practice with urban rail-trails.

For ease of description, the proposed trail was divided into five logical segments. The city's feasibility study, due to be completed in December 2004, will describe the segments and their respective technical characteristics in more detail and include trail cross-sections.

Survey respondents' comments and suggested improvements follow the descriptions of each segment below.

① MAIN STREET TO WEBSTER STREET: The trail's proposed western terminus is at Main Street and Ralph M. Appenzato Parkway (formerly Atlantic Avenue), adjacent to the former Alameda Naval Air Station (ANAS) on Alameda Point. At Main Street, the trail will connect with the Main Street Greenway. This segment of trail will utilize the former Alameda Belt Line property that is currently vacant and unimproved former Alameda Belt Line property.

This part of the trail will serve the growing population of Alameda Point where the former base is being redeveloped for commercial and residential uses. The trail will provide an excellent recreation and transportation resource to residents of Alameda's West End, and offer cyclists and walkers from other parts of Alameda and the region easy access to the attractions of Alameda Point.

SUGGESTIONS/COMMENTS

- ✦ Acquire easement or right-of-way.
- ✦ Install crossing lights at elementary school.
- ✦ Increase pedestrian crossing time at Webster Street, reduce wait time. (Add "Scramble" crosswalk.)
- ✦ Construct pedestrian overpass at Webster.
- ✦ Add landscaping and pedestrian furniture, such as benches, water fountains, interesting lights.
- ✦ Add landscape barrier to protect from traffic noise and smog.

- ✦ Create separate pathway for cyclists and pedestrians.
- ✦ Develop supportive business/visitor center (or bikestation) adjacent to greenway.

② WEBSTER STREET TO CONSTITUTION WAY:

At Webster Street and Atlantic Avenue, the Cross Alameda Trail crosses one of Alameda's busiest intersections. From this intersection, trail users could access the historic Webster Street commercial district, nearby Marina Village businesses, or board a bus headed for Alameda Point, Oakland, San Francisco, or BART.

SUGGESTIONS/COMMENTS

- ✦ Create dedicated bicycle lane separated from traffic and coordinate bike lane traffic signals with pedestrian and vehicular signals.
- ✦ Install bright lighting.
- ✦ Widen path (sidewalk) where possible to allow for passing.
- ✦ Install in-pavement flashing crosswalk lights.
- ✦ Make visually interesting for walkers.
- ✦ Reroute trail through parking lot or quieter area.
- ✦ Add secure bike racks at Marina Village and for those using buses to travel off of the island.

③ CONSTITUTION WAY TO SHERMAN STREET: The trail will enter the former Alameda Belt Line rail yard at the southeast corner of Atlantic and Constitution. This 22-acre parcel is one of the largest remaining open spaces in Alameda, and would provide the most "natural" experience for trail users.

The status (price and future zoning) of this Alameda Belt Line property is still unresolved, and it may either be preserved as open space or partially developed for housing. The CATSC recommends that a trail and linear park be included in any future plans.

Existing on-street bike lanes on Atlantic Avenue provide an alternate commute route for cyclists.

SUGGESTIONS/COMMENTS

- ✦ Ideal area for multi-use path and park.
- ✦ Separate bicyclists and pedestrians.
- ✦ Add landscaping.
- ✦ Install bright lights for safety.
- ✦ Develop like Main Street Greenway.
- ✦ Install bike lockers for adjacent businesses.
- ✦ Encourage businesses to adopt sections.

④ **SHERMAN STREET TO GRAND STREET:** The railroad right-of-way traverses the former Del Monte warehouse property. Clement Street will be extended through this area and also serve as a truck route. The property is currently under redevelopment.

SUGGESTIONS/COMMENTS

- ✦ A Class I facility should be established as part of the redevelopment of the property.
- ✦ Create multi-use path through this area.
- ✦ Add lighting, furniture, etc.
- ✦ Promote use of new businesses by trail users.

⑤ **GRAND STREET TO MILLER-SWEENEY ("FRUITVALE") BRIDGE:** From Grand Street to the Fruitvale Bridge, the old railroad line travels down the center of Clement Street to Tilden Way. The land use is primarily industrial and marine along the waterfront, with some residences on the south side of Clement. A long term goal in this section is to construct a continuous waterfront path. Clement Street is wide enough to add on-street bike lanes. Pedestrians may opt to utilize scenic Eagle or Buena Vista Avenues for direct access to the Park Street commercial district.

SUGGESTIONS/COMMENTS

- ✦ Remove rails.
- ✦ Bike lane should use Clement to Oak, Oak to Blanding, Blanding to Tilden.
- ✦ Mark trail (plastic inserts or landscaping) and give bikes, walkers, scooters, etc. safety margin from cars and trucks.
- ✦ Develop waterfront route.
- ✦ Install bike lockers on Park Street.
- ✦ Landscape Clement.
- ✦ Install bike/pedestrian-activated signals at Park Street and Blanding.

TRAIL FEATURES & AMENITIES:

Several design elements that were mentioned in surveys and community workshops can add visual and functional continuity to the trail. These include:

- ✦ Landscaping
- ✦ Interpretive Signage
- ✦ Other Signs (wayfinding, courtesy, regulatory)
- ✦ Pedestrian-scale furniture (benches, water fountains)
- ✦ Bike racks and staging areas
- ✦ Bike stations (adjacent to transit)

OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Several timely opportunities now exist that encourage the development of the Cross Alameda Trail and that require action before they are lost. Several significant constraints must also be addressed.

OPPORTUNITIES

- ✦ Undeveloped Alameda Belt Line rail yard and the linear parcel along Atlantic between Main and Webster.
- ✦ Redevelopment efforts along the Northern Waterfront, including the Del Monte warehouse and Bridgeside Center and the extension of Clement Street to Atlantic Avenue at Sherman.
- ✦ Upcoming bicycle and pedestrian plans.
- ✦ Webster Street Renaissance Project.

CONSTRAINTS

- ✦ Litigation over Alameda Belt Line railroad property.
- ✦ Unresolved zoning status of the former railyard.
- ✦ Existing and future development encroaching on the potential trail alignment.

RAILROAD BUILT BY
ALAMEDA FROM BROADWAY
TO GRAND ON CLEMENT.

WESTERN PACIFIC AND SANTA FE
RAILROAD JOINTLY PURCHASE THE
LINE FROM THE CITY AND NAME IT
THE ALAMEDA BELT LINE (ABL).

ABL'S BIGGEST
AND BUSIEST
YEARS.

ABL'S SPURS AND MAIN LINE
TOTAL 27 MILES, ALTHOUGH THE
MAIN LINE IS ONLY 5.

RAILROAD EXTENDED TO
WEBSTER STREET TO
SERVICE ENCINAL
TERMINALS.

THE CALIFORNIA PACKING
COMPANY (DEL MONTE)
BRICK WAREHOUSE IS
CONSTRUCTED ON THE ABL.

ABL CELEBRATES ITS
25TH BIRTHDAY AND
MOVES MORE THAN
48,000 CARS PER YEAR.

ABL LEASE EXPIRES;
IT SEEKS RENEWAL
OF THE ORIGINAL \$1
LEASE.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Though support for the potential trail is strong, a chief concern of Alameda residents and elected officials is the potential cost of implementation. Fortunately, numerous regional, state and federal funding sources are available to acquire, plan and construct trails and greenways.

Since the early 1990s, with the passage of federal transportation bills (ISTEA, TEA-21, and its pending successor) the number of programs — and the funding available through them — for implementing trails and greenways have continually grown.

The proven public health, transportation, recreation and economic benefits of a trail will soon outweigh the initial costs. Successfully funded trail campaigns have followed these strategies:

- ✦ Pursue a variety of funding sources. Trail planning and implementation require multi-faceted funding strategies. Divide the trail into segments based on available and appropriate funding sources as well as feasibility.
- ✦ Complete a Trail Master Plan and related environmental studies.
- ✦ Recruit local and state officials to champion the trail. Familiarize them with the trail via special visits and request letters of support from them for every grant application.
- ✦ Remain flexible. Temporary gaps in a trail are acceptable. In the short term, avoid problematic areas. Gaps in trails can make very compelling grant candidates.
- ✦ Work with Planning and Building and Development Services departments to get trail improvements completed as part of adjacent development projects.

The following is a partial list of potential funding sources for the Cross Alameda Trail⁶.

Bicycle Transportation Account: Caltrans' competitive BTA program provides approximately \$7 million a year (up to \$1.8 million/project) to projects that improve safety and convenience for bicycle commuters.

Measure B/ACTIA: In November 2000, Alameda County voters approved Measure B, which reauthorized the one-half cent sales tax to be used for transportation improvements. Passage of this measure established the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority (ACTIA) to administer the sales tax. Five percent of the net revenue collected by Measure B is dedicated to bicycle and pedestrian projects. These funds are divided into two funds:

- ✦ 75 percent of the funds are local "pass-through" funds which are distributed to Alameda County cities and the County based on population.
- ✦ 25 percent of the funds are for countywide planning and projects, including a competitive grant program called the "Measure B Bicycle and Pedestrian Countywide Discretionary Fund."

Safe Routes to Schools: The SR2S program provides funds to projects that help children walk and bicycle to school more safely. The program reimburses up to 90 percent of project costs, up to \$450,000.

Transportation Development Act (Article 3): TDA provides that one-quarter cent of retail sales tax is returned to the county of origin. Article 3 stipulates that 2 percent of these funds can be used to fund local bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The funds are distributed to cities based upon population.

Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC): The Bay Area's Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) offers the TLC program. It provides incentives for cities within the region to improve the range of transportation choices by pedestrian, transit and/or bicycle facilities. The TLC program offers up to \$75,000 in planning funds and up to \$3 million in capital funds for new facilities and projects.

ABL IS DOWN TO ONE
ENGINEER AND ONE ENGINE
MOVING 90 TO 100 CARS
PER WEEK.

NOVEMBER
ABL CARRIES ITS LAST
DELIVERY AND STOPS
RUNNING.

JULY 21,
CROSS ALAMEDA TRAIL VISION
DOCUMENT PRESENTED TO
CITY COUNCIL.

DECEMBER
CITY TO COMPLETE
FEASIBILITY STUDY.

TRAIL
OFFICIALLY
OPENS!

DEL MONTE CLOSURES. RAILROAD
DOWN TO FOUR CUSTOMERS,
MOVING 7 OR 8 FREIGHT CARS
EVERY TWO DAYS.

MEASURE E PASSES REZONING THE BELT LINE
RAILROAD YARD TO OPEN SPACE. MEASURE D
ALSO PASSES DELAYING IMPLEMENTATION OF
MEASURE E UNTIL THE PRICE OF THE RAILROAD
YARD IS DETERMINED AND VOTERS APPROVE
FUNDING.

TRAIL EASEMENTS ACQUIRED. STATUS
OF PROPERTY DETERMINED. GRANTS
OBTAINED FOR MASTER PLANNING,
RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION AND
CONSTRUCTION OF TRAIL.

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS

Obtain a grant to complete a Cross Alameda Trail Master Plan. Completing a trail master plan is key to acquiring funding for trail development.

Adopt a strong resolution in favor of the trail. This will indicate strong political support for the trail and for grant applications.

Develop political champions. Political champions at the local level help generate public support as well as political support at the regional and state level, where additional funds can be sought. Having vocal, effective political champions has proven to be a critical component of successful trail campaigns throughout California.

Include the trail in all relevant plans. To compete strongly for some funds, the trail must be identified as a regional priority (such as a "Countywide High Priority Project" through the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency). Complete an inventory of such opportunities.

Develop a phasing plan. Right-of-way issues widely differ along the Cross Alameda Trail. A feasibility based phasing plan will assure that trail construction can be started soon.

Negotiate with the railroad. Negotiate to acquire part or all of the right-of-way still owned by ABL. Attempt to secure an easement, make a partial purchase, or settle pending legal proceedings. Pursue litigation if required.

Convene a city task force comprised of staff and/or citizens to maintain the trail as a priority, monitor developments affecting the proposed trail, and capitalize on available opportunities.

Investigate trail extensions, including other unused railroad corridors.

1999 Bike Master Plan

Project #6: Northern Bikeway Corridor and Park/Fruitvale Bridges Bicycle Access

"...The plan recommends that the selected corridor improvements consist of possibly utilizing portions of the old Alameda Belt Line railroad right-of-way for a new pathway, new bike lanes where feasible, restriping the street if traffic conditions permit, bicycle access improvements to the Park Street Bridge via Blanding Avenue..."

1990 General Plan

Policy 6.1.h

"Develop a continuous greenway, east of Main Street north of Atlantic Avenue, and along the general alignment of the railroad right-of-way between Webster Street and Sherman Street, provided that the greenway design on each parcel allows for connection throughout the length of the greenway."

ENDNOTES

¹ Guide to Community Preventive Services, Community Guide Branch, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, December 26, 2002 www.communityguide.org

² Consumers' Survey on Smart Choices for Home Buyers, released in April, 2002 by the National Association of Realtors (NAR) and the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

³ Victoria Transport Policy Institute, 1999

⁴ According to Caltrans' Highway Design Manual, a "Class I Bikeway (Bike Path)" provides a completely separated right-of-way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with crossflow minimized. A "Class II Bikeway (Bike Lane)" provides a striped lane for one-way bike travel on a street or highway. A "Class III Bikeway (Bike Route)" provides for shared use with pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic.

⁵ Survey responses are only summarized here. The complete list of comments has been assembled and delivered to the Department of Public Works to use in a feasibility study of the corridor.

⁶ Matching funds are often required for 11.5 to 20% of total project costs. Generally, matching funds can come from other local, regional, state or federal funds but cannot usually come from the same source (i.e. federal transportation funds cannot match federal transportation funds.)



For more information, please contact
Melanie Mintz
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
California Field Office
26 O'Farrell Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, California 94108
Tel: 415-397-2220 • Fax: 415-397-2228
www.railtrails.org/California

Thanks to the City of Alameda Department of Public Works for its assistance with this project.

Special thanks to the San Francisco Foundation for its support of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and this project. Simulation on front cover by PGAdesign

CHAPTER I**PROJECT BACKGROUND**

The City of Alameda has an opportunity to develop a new multi-use trail along the northern side of the City's main island, a corridor that includes a former rail line. The rail alignment was formerly used by the Alameda Belt Line railroad, which served some of Alameda's major industrial sites on the north side of Alameda's main island during the past 100 years. The "Cross Alameda Trail" would enhance the City's transportation infrastructure and recreational opportunities; provide enhanced bicycle and pedestrian access to the City's major commercial districts and redevelopment sites; and provide a link to the corridor's historic past by celebrating its industrial history. The multiple uses for the Trail will ensure that there is a strong, diverse constituency in the community to carry the project through to completion and maintain it as a high-quality facility in the future. One of the key challenges of this project will be to meet the needs of all of the potential users of the Trail, including commuters and others making utilitarian trips, as well as recreational users. In some cases, to avoid conflicts between the various types of users, separate "recreational" and "commuter" routes may be required.

This corridor has long been identified as a potential trail route, but the growing interest in developing the former rail corridor has brought a new urgency to the project. Opportunities to construct new trails are infrequent in older cities such as Alameda, and the City is concerned that by neglecting to act now, this opportunity could be lost.

In December 2003, the City of Alameda was awarded a Bay Trail grant from the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) to conduct a feasibility study of the Cross Alameda Trail. Shortly before the City was selected for this funding, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC), a non-profit organization dedicated to converting abandoned railroad corridors to public trails, received funding from the San Francisco Foundation to develop a concept plan for the Cross Alameda Trail. To maximize the efficient use of resources, the City and RTC coordinated their respective efforts, with the RTC effort serving as the primary mechanism for soliciting public input regarding the City's feasibility study. This framework also enabled the public involvement process to not be constrained by the needs or goals of the City, which would be accounted for as part of the technical analysis. This report focuses on the results of the City's technical feasibility of constructing the Trail.

Bay Trail

The Bay Trail, once complete, will encircle San Francisco Bay with over 400 miles of trail in nine counties. Portions of the Bay Trail in Alameda are complete, notably the paths along Shoreline Drive and on Bay Farm Island, which are heavily used for recreation. But many other segments have also been completed, including paths in Marina Village and at the Grand Marina.

While the Bay Trail is generally located as close to the shoreline as possible, much of the northern shore of Alameda's main island has not been available for development, so the Bay Trail alignment adopted by ABAG is further from the shore. In this corridor, the Bay Trail alignment includes Ralph Appezato Memorial Parkway, Atlantic Avenue, Buena Vista Avenue, and Tilden Way.

Work Scope

The work scope of this feasibility study includes the following tasks:

1. Identify legal constraints of acquiring property or easements for the proposed alignment and acquire preliminary information. Current property owners, existing easements, and title/deed restrictions of parcels in the study area will be identified.
2. Prepare a base map, including property ownership, land use types, topography, environmental features, existing infrastructure, and existing roadways, trails, and bicycle facilities.
3. Create trail corridor map. Develop and evaluate three alternative trail alignments, then identify a preferred alignment.
4. Conduct field analysis.
 - Identify and evaluate constraints to trail development in this corridor.
 - Identify connections to nearby commercial areas, parks, schools, other trails, parking and other important sites.
5. Identify constraints, including engineering issues, environmental concerns, and community opposition.
6. Develop general trail design standards, including width, access, placement, surface, and grade.
7. Develop typical cross-sections for each segment of the trail.
8. Site-specific standards to illustrate roadway crossings.
9. Estimate costs of right-of-way acquisition, engineering, construction, ongoing operations and maintenance.
10. Determine locations of access points.
11. Develop a trail management strategy.

It was recognized early on that the current status of properties along the waterfront made the development of a shoreline path a long-term prospect. In addition, there is the potential for additional development at inland locations in the corridor. Therefore, in addition to looking at the specific characteristics of the proposed trail corridor, a significant product of the study was a set of guidelines to be applied to new development projects in the trail corridor to ensure that sufficient right-of-way is provided to accommodate the trail. This will facilitate proactive long-range planning by the City as development opportunities present themselves.

Study Area

The limits of the Cross-Alameda Trail are from Main Street (westerly terminus) to Tilden Way (easterly terminus). In addition, it is envisioned that the Trail will ultimately continue west of Main Street into Alameda Point, terminating at the Seaplane Lagoon.

The study area is divided into five sections:

1. Main Street to Webster Street

2. Webster Street to Constitution Way
3. Constitution Way to Sherman Street
4. Sherman Street to Grand Street
5. Grand Street to Tilden Way

To facilitate ease of trail implementation, the proposed alignments took advantage of vacant properties in the corridor. The parcels formerly used by the Alameda Belt Line railroad provide a linear corridor with a limited number of landowners, which reduces the number of potential land acquisition negotiations. This is especially true for the portion of the trail from Main Street to Sherman Street.

Since a goal of the San Francisco Bay Trail Project is to promote and advocate implementation of the Bay Trail as a means of maximizing shoreline access, the status of the shoreline properties in this corridor was assessed. A shoreline path would be somewhat circuitous, and would serve a primarily recreational function. By contrast, the former Alameda Belt Line route is more direct and closer to many key destinations in Alameda, potentially providing a viable off-road route for bicycle commuters as well as pedestrians.

Public Involvement

As noted above, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy took the lead on the public involvement component of the project, while the City's Public Works Department managed the feasibility study and conducted the technical analysis related to the development of the Trail. RTC completed the first phase of its public outreach initiatives while the City was conducting the feasibility study. To help guide the process, RTC contacted various groups that had indicated their support for the Cross Alameda Trail to solicit their interest in participating in the project steering committee. While the Public Works Department was not a formal member of the steering committee, staff participated and provided input into its discussions and work products to ensure coordination with the City portion of the project. The City also provided technical support to the Steering Committee throughout the public outreach process.

- Brochure/survey: The Steering Committee developed and distributed a brochure about the proposed Cross Alameda Trail to raise awareness about the project. The brochure included a map of the trail corridor and a survey. It was distributed at meetings of numerous community groups, at local businesses, and was made available on RTC's web site.
- Community Meeting: On June 2, 2004 the Steering Committee sponsored a public meeting at Coffee for Thought, a local café on Webster Street, located a few blocks from the proposed Trail.
- Tour of Trail Corridor: The meeting was followed up by a tour of the proposed trail alignment on June 5, 2004, which was National Trails Day. This gave residents the opportunity to discuss and visualize what the corridor could potentially look like.

- Web Site: RTC posted project information on its web site (www.railtrails.org). In addition to the brochure and the survey, the site included computer-enhanced photos of the potential trail corridor to help people visualize the completed facility.
- Presentations to Community Organizations: RTC staff and steering committee members made presentations on the Trail to the Alameda Point Advisory Committee, Homebase, and the Kiwanis Club.

Comments collected in the surveys illustrated a strong preference for an off-road trail, as opposed to on-street bicycle facilities with sidewalks. When asked an open-ended question about what elements of the proposed trail would be most important to them, respondents emphasized two features:

- proximity to nature and the presence of trees or landscaping (86%), and
- off-road path, separated from vehicular traffic (75%).

On July 20, 2004, Melanie Mintz of RTC made a presentation the Alameda City Council to provide them with an overview of their work. Since that time, RTC has been awarded additional funding by the San Francisco Foundation to continue its public involvement work associated with the Cross Alameda Trail.

Feasibility Study Goals

As described in the work scope above, the Public Works Department evaluated the technical feasibility of constructing a trail in this corridor. Using the information that was collected, the input collected through the efforts of RTC and the steering committee, and existing City policies, the following goals were established for the Trail:

- Develop an off-road trail where possible.
- The Trail corridor should include landscaping and trees.
- Utilize the former alignment of the Alameda Belt Line railroad.
- Trail should be a viable transportation corridor as well as a recreational facility.
- Provide protection to bicyclists and pedestrians at intersection crossings along the Trail.
- Include amenities, such as benches, parking areas, lighting.
- Explore ways to link nearby businesses and places of interest to the Trail.

Facility Types

Based on input from the public and the City's adopted policy framework, there are multiple user groups and purposes envisioned for the Cross Alameda Trail, and the needs of some user groups may sometimes conflict. Therefore, as noted above, it was decided to develop separate facilities in some portions of the corridor so that the Trail could best serve these varied user groups.

Several different types of facilities have been recommended as an outcome from this study. In discussing bikeway facilities, this report has used the definitions from Caltrans' *Highway Design Manual*:

- (1) Class I Bikeway (Bike Path). "Provides a completely separated right of way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with crossflow minimized."

- (2) Class II Bikeway (Bike Lane). "Provides a striped lane for one-way bike travel on a street or highway."
- (3) Class III Bikeway (Bike Route). "Provides for shared use with pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic." Bike routes are generally indicated with signage and may also include pavement markings to help raise the awareness of motorists to the presence of bicyclists.

Bicycle "boulevards" may be another option on some low-volume, residential streets. There is no standard definition for a bicycle boulevard, but it is generally similar to a bike route in that motor vehicles share space with bicycles; however, a bicycle boulevard may also include enhanced signage, pavement markings, traffic calming devices, and other modifications to improve the street conditions for bicyclists beyond the typical Class III bikeway.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF THE TRAIL CORRIDOR

The City of Alameda has a rich industrial history. The northern shoreline of the City's main island has long been the home to major shipping and commercial marine activities, particularly the Northern Waterfront. However, development trends in the area are resulting in a transformation from an industrial corridor to one with more of a mix of land uses.

Industrial and Military History

The Northern Waterfront, located approximately in the center of the Cross Alameda Trail corridor, has been home to Alameda's principal industrial area for over 100 years. Around 1890, the Alaska Packers Association – then the world's largest salmon-packing company – started berthing its vessels in the area currently run by the Grand Marina. During the two world wars and the Vietnam war, large industrial, shipbuilding, and commercial uses such as Encinal Terminals, Del Monte Warehouse, Weyerhaeuser, Pennzoil, and Listo Pencil Company emerged as leading economic activities at the Northern Waterfront. However, during the 1970s, the Northern Waterfront area experienced a decline in activity when many of the commercial shipyards closed.

The other major employer in this corridor was the Alameda Naval Air Station (NAS), which was commissioned in 1940 and remained open until 1996. It was the City's largest employer, with over 18,000 military and civilian personnel. Since the closure of the base, the property – now known as Alameda Point – has been undergoing a redevelopment process. This project is anticipated to create a major new destination point at the City's west end.

Alameda Belt Line Railroad

The Alameda Belt Line railroad (ABL) played a key role in the historical development of the City of Alameda, and played an important role in the success of the companies mentioned above as well as the NAS. The City initially developed rail service through this corridor. In 1924, the railroad was sold to ABL, corporate venture of Western Pacific Railroad Company and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company. In addition to providing rail access for the Northern Waterfront area, the rail service was ultimately extended across the island to the NAS. ABL established the area south of Atlantic Avenue between Constitution Way and Sherman Street as a rail yard in 1926, a function it continued to serve until 1988. The Alameda Belt Line ceased operations in 1998. Pennzoil is the last remaining customer along the rail alignment, no longer uses rail to transport goods.

The past 30 years have seen the beginning of a dramatic change for this corridor. With the closing of the NAS and the phasing out of much of the industry in the area, many of the properties have been or are proposed to be converted for mixed or residential use. Current and proposed projects are described in Chapter 3.

Current Status of the Corridor

When the City sold its railroad to ABL, the two parties signed an agreement allowing the City to purchase back the property and all of its extensions for the initial purchase price. With the halt of rail service along most of the corridor, there has been a growing interest in utilizing the former ABL route as open space. The City's 1991 General Plan includes an open space designation through the two primary ABL properties, the south side of Appezzato Memorial Parkway from Main Street to Webster Street, and the former ABL rail yard between Constitution Way and Sherman Street. Currently, the City of Alameda and the owners of the ABL property are in litigation to determine whether the City can exercise the 1924 option to purchase the property.

Alameda residents have also expressed their support for the use of the ABL properties as open space. In 2002 two ballot measures (Measure D & E) involving the ABL property were approved. Measure E proposed changing the designation of the property in the Land Use element of the General Plan to Parks and Public Open Space, and amending the City's zoning ordinance and zoning map to classify the property as an Open Space District. Measure D proposed delaying the implementation of Measure E until voters approve a means of funding the acquisition of the property if required.

While the disposition of the former rail yard property may not be resolved for some time, the City is currently working with the owners of the former ABL alignment – Burlington Northern and Union Pacific – to discuss the potential acquisition of the property south of Appezzato Memorial Parkway between Main Street and Webster Street.

Throughout the remainder of the Alignment, the rail is within the public right-of-way. Although the railroad company will need to file a formal abandonment request, the terms of its lease with the City note that if the rail was not in operation for more than two years the lease would expire. So for practical purposes the continuity of the alignment has been severed by the lack of use in recent years.

CHAPTER III

RELATIONSHIP TO ADOPTED PLANS

The Cross Alameda Trail supports adopted Regional, County and City plans. In addition, there are several City planning and development efforts currently under way in the trail corridor. This makes the Trail very timely, as there is the opportunity to integrate the Trail with these projects while they are in the early stages of project development.

Consistency with Regional and County Plans

The Bay Area has a complex governmental hierarchy, and various agencies are responsible for different aspects of transportation and shoreline development. Coordination between the City and these agencies is essential not only for acquiring the approvals needed to advance the implementation of projects, but to access the full range of funding opportunities.

Below is a description of a number of key plans relating to the development of the Cross Alameda Trail.

Bay Trail Plan

The Bay Trail Plan proposes the development of a trail around the perimeter of San Francisco and San Pablo Bays. The adopted alignment for the Bay Trail is approximately 400 miles long and links the shoreline in the nine Bay Area counties. The Cross Alameda Trail is located along the adopted alignment, and the City will meet one of the primary goals of the Bay Trail Plan by pursuing a shoreline path in this corridor as a long-term objective. The Bay Trail Project, which includes staff dedicated to planning, promoting and advocating implementation of the Bay Trail, is administered by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), which provided the primary funding for this study.

Regional Bicycle Plan

The Regional Bicycle Plan, prepared by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and adopted in 2001, includes regionally significant bicycle facilities throughout the nine Bay Area counties. The Alameda Bay Trail is a project in the regional plan and includes all Bay Trail segments in Alameda.

Alameda Countywide Bicycle Plan

The Countywide Bicycle Plan, completed in 2001, is a project of the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency (CMA). Most of the Cross Alameda Trail is included in the countywide plan, from the intersection of Appezzato Memorial Parkway and Fifth Street to the east end of the Trail at Tilden Way.

Consistency with City Policies and Plans

The Cross Alameda Trail will support policies contained in numerous City plans, as it will enhance bicycle and pedestrian transportation opportunities as well as shoreline access. The Trail is being included in the plans discussed below that are still being developed.

City of Alameda General Plan

This project supports a number of policies in the City of Alameda's General Plan (GP), which was adopted in 1991, as well as some policies from subsequent GP amendments. Below is a list of the relevant policies, arranged by element:

Land Use Element:

- 2.10.d At locations where it is infeasible to provide public access to the shoreline, or allow public use or publicly owned shoreline, such as along the Tidal Canal, continued private use should be permitted only if mitigation is provided by improving public shoreline access elsewhere in the City.

City Design Element:

- 3.2.a Maximize views of water and access to shorelines.

Transportation Element:

- 4.4.c Identify potential conflicts between bicyclists and pedestrians and develop projects to minimize such conflicts.

Parks and Recreation, Shoreline Access, Schools, and Cultural Facilities Element:

- 6.1.d Promote the development and retention of private open space to compensate for the shortage of public open space.
- 6.1.h Develop a continuous greenway, east of Main Street and north of Atlantic Avenue, and along the general alignment of the railroad right-of-way between Webster Street and Sherman Street, provided that the greenway design on each parcel allows for connection throughout the length of the greenway.
- 6.2.a Maximize visual and physical access to the shoreline and to open water.
- 6.2.b Regulate development on City-owned shoreline property to maximize public use opportunities.
- 6.2.e Remove impediments to enjoyment of shoreline access where legal access exists.
- 6.2.f Cooperate with property owners adjoining shoreline access points to ensure that public use does not cause unnecessary loss of privacy or unwarranted nuisance.
- 6.2.h Require shoreline access where appropriate as a condition of development approval regardless of whether development occurs within the area of BCDC regulation.
- 6.2.i Seek grants for implementation of Bay Trail segments

CHAPTER IV

CORRIDOR LAND USE AND TRAIL CONNECTIONS

The Cross-Alameda Trail will establish a major bicycle and pedestrian route to key points along the north side of Alameda's Main Island. This chapter describes how the proposed trail will provide connections to existing points of interest as well as proposed/planned projects in the vicinity of the trail corridor. For reference, the heading of each section indicates the sheet in Appendix A that displays the relevant portion of the Trail corridor.

Summary of Existing/Planned/Proposed Development in the Cross Alameda Trail Corridor

Trail Section	Site	Status	Location	Description of Project
1 – Main Street to Webster Street	Alameda Point	Planned	Former Alameda Naval Air Station, west of Main Street	Over 4 million square feet of mixed use, including nearly 2,000 residential units.
	FISC	Planned/under construction	North of Appezzato Memorial Parkway	Up to 1.3 million square feet of office and R&D facilities, over 500 residential units, and a school.
	Harbor Island Apartments	Planned renovations to existing facility	South of Appezzato Memorial Parkway, east of Poggi Street	Renovation of 615-unit apartment complex.
2 – Webster Street to Constitution Way	Webster Square	Existing	Southeast corner of Atlantic Avenue and Webster Street	21,500 square feet of retail space.
3 – Constitution Way to Sherman Street	Marina Village	Existing	East of Constitution Way, north of former Alameda Belt Line railroad yard	1.2 million square feet of offices, 180 residential units, 240,000 square foot shopping center, marina, and hotel
4 – Sherman Street to Grand Street	Del Monte	Proposed	Northeast corner of Buena Vista Ave./ Sherman St.	250,000 square feet of commercial, including 80,595 square feet of work/live studios (60 units).
	Encinal Terminals	Proposed	East of Wind River complex	222,000 square feet of residential (165 units) and 400 marina berths
	Marina Cove	Phase I complete, Phase II proposed	East of Del Monte	45-50 new single-family units
	Grand Marina	Proposed	West of Grand St.	Up to 180 new residential units.
5 – Grand Street to Tilden Way	Alameda Marina	Existing	Clement Avenue, east of Grand Street	
	Park Street Landing Shopping Center	Existing	Blanding Avenue, west of Park Street	
	Bridgeside Shopping Center	Planned expansion of existing facility	Northwest corner of Blanding Ave./Tilden Way	Expansion of existing shopping center to 108,500 square feet of commercial space

Section 1: Main Street to Webster Street (Sheets 1-3)

This section of the former rail alignment links the Webster Street business district to the west end's major development projects. It is currently designated as open space in the General Plan (see Figure IV-1); it is largely zoned as multi-unit residential, with the eastern end of the property zoned commercial. This trail section will serve as both the Recreational and Commuter Routes.

Existing development:

The area south of Appezzato Memorial Parkway includes both apartments and single-family homes. Residents of this neighborhood have the lowest household income level in Alameda. Since lower-income people have relatively low levels of automobile ownership and are more reliant on walking, bicycling, and public transportation, the addition of the Trail will be of significant benefit to this community.

The eastern terminus of this section is at Webster Street, one of Alameda's primary business districts. Streetscape improvements – including transit plazas, curb extensions, and landscaping – are under construction on a portion of Webster Street, and the Trail would be an important east/west connector between this revitalized business district and Alameda Point.

The Trail will also provide an access route for students at the College of Alameda (which has an enrollment of over 5,000 students) on Appezzato Memorial Parkway and to Woodstock Elementary School (enrollment of about 300 students), located on Third Street just south of Appezzato Memorial Parkway.

Proposed/planned development:

Alameda's West End is undergoing a major transformation, as the former Alameda Naval Air Station (Alameda Point) and the former Fleet Industrial Supply Center (FISC) are being redeveloped for civilian use. The residential portion of the former FISC site – known as Bayport – is located on the north side of Appezzato Memorial Parkway and is currently under construction. The segment along the water is currently zoned for office/commercial, but due to a downturn in the commercial real estate market, the developer has not finalized its plans for this portion of the project.

The Harbor Island Apartments, a 615-unit complex just south of the proposed trail alignment, is about to undergo a major renovation.

Recreational facilities:

Woodstock Park, which includes a recreation center, ball fields and a picnic area, is adjacent to Woodstock Elementary School, just off Third Street.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities:

The western terminus of the Trail is across the street from the existing Main Street Greenway, which has been designated as a segment of Bay Trail. The Main Street Greenway, located on the east side of Main Street, includes separate bicycle and pedestrian paths. It connects to Coast

CHAPTER V

POTENTIAL ALIGNMENT OPTIONS AND CONSTRAINTS

The Cross Alameda Trail corridor currently includes a wide variety of land uses and conditions. This section provides a visual look and general description of the current site conditions, key issues that will need to be addressed in each section, and potential commuter and recreational alignment options for the Trail corridor.

As a segment of Bay Trail, the preferred alignment for the Cross Alameda Trail is a Class I bikeway/multi-use path. In some sections of the proposed Trail corridor, where the off-street path offers a direct, uninterrupted route, the path should be able to serve the needs of both recreational users and commuters. However in many locations, such a path would result in a somewhat circuitous route, especially along the shoreline, and this would not be useful for commuter-oriented users in this corridor. For trail sections where this is the case, this project has evaluated the feasibility of on-street bicycle facilities to complement the off-street path. This "commuter alignment" generally features Class II bike lanes, which would be designed to enable riders to reach their destinations as quickly as possible. The inclusion of both off-street and on-street routes in this corridor supports the City's Bicycle Master Plan.

An important consideration in terms of project implementation is timing. The development of a shoreline path east of Grand Street may be feasible in the long-term, but the property is privately-owned and the current uses are not compatible with a trail at many locations. So while a path can be constructed parcel-by-parcel, as redevelopment occurs, the City is also pursuing interim "recreational alignment" options. These interim options will utilize sidewalks and Class III bike routes.

The accompanying maps in Appendix A illustrate the location of each alignment option, parcel boundaries, existing infrastructure, major destination points in Alameda, connections to existing bicycle facilities, and existing shoreline access areas. The sheet numbers for each section are indicated in the heading for each section of the Trail. A summary of the features of each section is included on page V-22.

Cross Alameda Trail Alignment Overview

Trail Section	Description of Section and Alignment Options
Section 1: Main St. to Webster St.	<u>Commuter/Recreational Alignment:</u> Class I path would be built along the south side of Appezzato Memorial Parkway on vacant property formerly used by the Alameda Belt Line Railroad.
Section 2: Webster St. to Constitution Way	<u>Commuter/Recreational Alignment:</u> Class I path would utilize and expand the existing sidewalk on south side of Atlantic Avenue.

Section 3: Constitution Way to Sherman St.	<u>Commuter Alignment:</u> Maintain existing Class II facility (bike lane) along Atlantic Avenue. <u>Recreational Alignment 1:</u> Route would be constructed as a Class I path through the former Alameda Belt Line railroad yard.
Section 4: Sherman St. to Grand St.	<u>Commuter Alignment:</u> Route consists of bike lanes along Clement Avenue <u>Recreational Alignment 1:</u> Route consists of bike route along Sherman Street and Buena Vista Avenue <u>Recreational Alignment 2:</u> Recreational route consisting of bike route or bike boulevard along Sherman Street and Pacific Avenue <u>Recreational Alignment 3:</u> Recreational route, consisting of Class I path along shoreline
Section 5: Grand St. to Tilden Way	<u>Commuter Alignment:</u> Route consists of bike lanes along Clement Avenue <u>Recreational Alignment 1:</u> Route consists of bike route along Buena Vista Avenue <u>Recreational Alignment 2:</u> Route consists of bike route or bike boulevard along Pacific Avenue, Walnut Street, and Buena Vista Avenue <u>Recreational Alignment 3:</u> Route consists of Class I path along shoreline

Section 1: Main Street to Webster Street (Sheets 1-3)

The property between Main Street and Webster Street to the south of Appezzato Memorial Parkway is the former route of the Alameda Belt Line railroad. This section is approximately 4500 feet long and 70 feet wide. There are four signalized intersections – at Main Street, Poggi Street, Third Street, and Webster Street – that the Trail would cross in this section. This corridor serves an important function, as it will be the primary gateway into Alameda Point.

The two parcels in this corridor are currently owned by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway and Union Pacific. The properties are currently vacant, with the exception of a wooden structure just east of Third Street (see Figure V-2). The rails and ballast have generally been removed, although rails remain in the two road crossings in this section. The smaller of the two parcels is currently being leased by the Alameda Unified School District for use as a parking lot. The lease may be abandoned with the school's planned relocation to another site. Adjacent properties in this corridor are developed with residential uses, with the exception of retail shops at the corner of Appezzato Memorial Parkway and Main Street and a car lot on Webster Street.

The City is interested in acquiring this property to construct the Trail. While the cost of residential property in Alameda has increased dramatically in recent years, the building potential of this property is constrained by several factors, including the existence of a 20 to 30-foot wide storm drain easement along the southern boundary of the property, and restrictions in the City's zoning ordinance. The unusual dimensions of the property make it well-suited for the development of a linear park.

Alameda Times-Star

Group calls for Island trail blazers

Tour of proposed Cross Alameda recreation route due this weekend

By Susan McDonough
STAFF WRITER

Wednesday, June 02, 2004 - ALAMEDA -- A plan to turn an abandoned railroad into a paved trail across the north shore of Alameda begins to take foot this week with a public tour of the proposed hike.

The Cross Alameda Trail -- a 5-mile stretch along the former Alameda Belt Line Railroad tracks between the old Navy base and the Miller-Sweeney Bridge -- has been in the works since 1999 when community activist Jean Sweeney pioneered the idea.

But complications over land deals and funding for the project have kept it just "percolating along," said organizer and bike activist John Spangler.

"A lot of people have wanted to see (the trail) for a long time," he said.

Spangler is on the board of Bike Alameda, which promotes alternative transportation in Alameda, and is a member of the city's Transportation Commission.

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, a national non-profit that has helped U.S. communities convert 12,000 miles of unused rail lines to nature trails, helped the Cross Alameda group secure a grant from the Association of Bay Area Governments for a feasibility study.

That study is currently being done by the city's public works staff, Spangler said.

Meanwhile, the group will lead a tour of a portion of the proposed trail Saturday.

"It will get people outdoors to see what the lay of the land literally is," Spangler said.

The group also will hold a community meeting indoors tonight to hear public comments on the trail.

Rails-to-Trails recently helped secure a \$1.9 million grant from the Bay Area's Metropolitan Transportation Commission to build a 2.5-mile trail through the city of Richmond. That green space is scheduled to open in about three years.

"There is money out there to help construct trails," said Rails-to-Trails Project Coordinator Melanie Mintz.

Mintz said with support from the Alameda community the Cross Alameda Trail is "definitely a fundable trail."

The Cross Alameda Trail group will hold a community workshop tonight at 8:30 at Coffee for Thought, 1544 Webster St., Alameda.

The Cross Alameda tour will start at 10 a.m. Saturday, at Main Street and Appezato Parkway (formerly Atlantic Avenue), near the entrance to the former Navy base. It will end at Littlejohn Park, 1401 Pacific Ave. at noon. Return transportation will not be provided but organizers say AC Transit bus routes serve most of the proposed trail. Wear comfortable walking shoes, and bring sunscreen, water, a hat, camera and a small notebook, the group advises. Call Rails-to-Trails at (415) 397-2220 or visit the group's Web site, www.railtrails.org to join the tour or for details.